


Reflections on Translating Poetry through ChatGPT: Insights from Arabic, English, and French

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Abstract

Each language has its unique poetic traditions and stylistic nuances. ChatGPT excels in some aspects of these and falls short in others. This study explored these strengths and weaknesses across three languages: Arabic, English, and French. Through a comparative analysis of three short poems, the study evaluated ChatGPT-enabled translations alongside human translations. Findings show that ChatGPT-based translations exhibit specific limitations requiring human intervention with poetic expertise in both the source and target languages. Such limitations illustrate how AI tools fail to preserve poetic devices accurately, convey emotional connotations, and capture cultural context. Elements such as metaphors, similes, and alliteration rely heavily on subtle linguistic nuances, which are challenging for AI to translate accurately. AI-generated translations hardly capture the artistic and historical contexts that imbue poems with deep emotional connotations. With these findings, the study adds to the ongoing debate about the reliability of AI-enabled translations of poetic texts. It suggests a balanced approach that leverages AI tools while acknowledging the irreplaceable value of human creativity and cultural insight in translating poetry.

Keywords: artificial intelligence (AI), ChatGPT, poetry, translation, verse

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Introduction

Translating poetry has always been a challenge. It is widely argued that preserving the original meaning while staying true to the source is a difficult task. In the age of Artificial intelligence (AI) now, once a poem gets translated into another language by a machine, it loses its beauty. Poetry, like many other genres of discourse, has undergone waves of machine translation (Ahmed et al., 2024; Alafnan, 2023, Castilho et al., 2018). While prior research assert that AI-based translation may achieve success in translating prose (Ahmed et al, 2025; Sahari et al., 2023), capturing the nuances of poetic language remains a complex task (Alowedi & Al-Ahdal, 2023; Rahayu, 2023; Smith & Johnson, 2023). It is possible to argue that prose translation involves straightforward sentence structures and relatively unambiguous phrases. In comparison, poetry relies on subtle nuances, emotional undertones, and symbolic meanings, presenting considerable difficulties for AI (Walsh et al., 2024). Almaktray (2022) and Thabet and Qadha (2024) maintained that poetic language is characterized by its use of figurative language, rhyme, meter, and other stylistic elements which are not meant for machine and robotic language. The challenge is further compounded by the cultural and historical contexts embedded in poetry (Ahmed et al., 2024; Alkadi & Ali, 2024).

Doudou and Faizi (2024) argued that both AI and human translations have strengths and pitfalls, with human translations better capturing cultural authenticity and emotional depth. AI, while efficiently processing large volumes of text, lacks the cultural and emotional intelligence required to fully grasp these intricate details. The preservation of cultural context has remained a major challenge for poetry translation because real poetry is deeply rooted in specific cultural and historical contexts, and these nuances can be lost in translation (Al-Kadi et al., 2024). AI systems may struggle to understand and convey these cultural references, resulting in translations that are inaccurate or culturally insensitive (Alowedi et al., 2023; Almaktray, 2022). Poems often reflect the unique socio-cultural environment of their origin, making it essential for translators to have a profound understanding of these contexts to produce accurate translations (Obeidat, & Jaradat, 2024).

The richness of poetic language requires a deep understanding of both source and target languages which AI systems are still striving to achieve. Poetic devices such as metaphors, similes, and allegories add layers of complexity to poetry translation (Al-Kadi et al., 2024; Doudou & Faizi, 2024). These devices are often deeply rooted in the specific cultural milieu of language, and finding equivalent expressions in another language can be an arduous task for AI. So, AI-generated translations struggle to preserve the essence and beauty of the original text, often leading to translations that are technically accurate but lack artistic flair. Existing studies have shown that AI systems often struggle to accurately capture these nuances of poetic language devices, and this leads to translations without the original text's poetic qualities. What is more, the emotional connotations of poetry can be difficult to convey in automatic translation, as they are often culturally specific and rely on subtle linguistic cues (Almaktray, 2022, Alowedi & Al-Ahdal, 2023).

Despite the existing research on AI and poetry translation (Alowedi & Al-Ahdal, 2023; Alowedi et al., 2023; Amini et al., 2024; Lieber et al., 2024; Obeidat & Jaradat, 2024), there is a need to ascertain whether AI has similar difficulties in translating poetry in other languages than English. A few studies have explored the challenges of translating poetry from English to other languages (Karaban & Karaban, 2024; Obeidat & Jaradat, 2024; Thabet & Qadha, 2024), yet there is a need for more research on the translation of poetry from and into languages such as Arabic and French. Furthermore, existing research often focuses on the drawbacks of AI in translating poetry, but there is a need to explore potential solutions and strategies for improving the quality of machine translation (Castilho et al., 2018) for poetic texts. This study mainly contributes to the ongoing research to improve the quality of machine translation (Castilho et al., 2018). It has a tri-lingual focus to provide a broader perspective than studies focusing on one or two languages. The overall goal is to account for the complexities of poetic language and produce translations beyond the abilities of current versions of AI tools.

Research questions

1. What is the extent ChatGPT can translate poems in Arabic, English, and French from the viewpoint of the poet himself?
2. Does variance exist based on the language of original poems?
3. What are the common pitfalls of translating short poems by ChatGPT?

Literature Review

Machine Translation

The field of machine translation has witnessed significant advancements in recent years, with AI-powered systems demonstrating impressive capabilities in translating prose texts (Castilho et al., 2018). Quite recently, machine translation has demonstrated remarkable capabilities in translating prose texts (Tahseen & Hussein, 2024). However, the translation of poetry presents challenges due to its reliance on literary devices, emotional connotations, and cultural context (Alowedi et al., 2023; Thabet & Qadha, 2024), making it a more complex task for AI (Tahseen & Hussein, 2024). Recent efforts in AI development have aimed to enhance the quality of machine translations (Castilho et al., 2018), particularly for poetic texts (Amini et al. 2024). Poetry, with its intricate use of metaphors, similes, alliteration, and other poetic devices, requires a nuanced understanding that extends beyond literal translation (Karaban & Karaban, 2023). These elements often hinge on subtle linguistic nuances that AI systems struggle to comprehend and translate accurately. Additionally, the emotional connotations embedded in poetry, which are frequently rooted in rich cultural and historical contexts, are prone to being lost in translation when handled by AI (Sukmaningrum et al., 2023). This is important for understanding the limitations of AI in translating poetry and the need for continuous innovation to achieve more accurate and culturally sensitive translations, marking a significant step forward in the intersection of AI and the humanities (Karaban & Karaban, 2023). Walsh et al. (2024) underscored current AI-related issues of capturing the nuanced and diverse qualities of human poetry and highlighted the need for further research to improve AI's creative and interpretive capabilities in poetry translation.

Challenges of Machine Translation

Three important studies built their themes around the difficulties and possibilities of AI for translating poetry. To begin with, Thabet and Qadha (2024) investigated the impact of AI-based translation tools on Saudi EFL learners' ability to translate Dr. Ghazi Al-Qusaibi's poetry—a well-known Saudi poet. The study showed how incorporating AI strategically in the translation process helps learners tackle the difficulties of translating poetry, which demands significant cultural context and imaginative interpretation of symbolic language. The study advised using AI tools with caution and in conjunction with other learning strategies. Second, Lieber et al. (2024) highlighted AI's inability to fully grasp context and nuance, its reliance on data and algorithms that can introduce biases and errors, and its lack of creativity and originality. The study emphasized the importance of human intelligence in problem-solving and decision-making. Human judgment, creativity, and empathy are invaluable qualities that AI currently lacks.

Moreover, humans must maintain control over AI systems to ensure their beneficial use and mitigate potential risks. Lieber et al. (2024) discussed the concept of "artificial stupidity" and its implications for AI to highlight the importance of recognizing and addressing the flaws and errors in AI so as to improve its reliability and decision-making capabilities. The third study is by Alowedi and Al-Ahdal (2023). The study compared human and machine translations of Arabic poetry, focusing on the poems "Nothing of Note" and "One Day." findings showed that while machine translation (MT) can be accurate in some respects, it struggles to capture cultural context, poetic devices, and emotional nuances. For example, MT may change cultural references, alter the meaning of adjectives, and fail to understand the genre of the poem. These limitations highlight the importance of human translators in preserving the richness and complexity of poetic language.

Likewise, Obeidat and Jaradat (2024) examined the impact of AI-based translations: Google Translate and ChatGPT, on resistance literature, using Berman's twelve tendencies as a framework. Focusing on the short story "Until We Return," the research highlights how these tools could distort the original text due to their lack of nuanced understanding and context. They significantly alter the text, with common issues like rationalization, qualitative impoverishment, and destruction of rhythms. The study called for alternative translation techniques that preserve the integrity of resistance literature, ensuring accurate representation and honoring the voices of the oppressed and marginalized. Prioritizing fidelity in translation is essential for maintaining the essence of such literature amidst technological advancements.

However, some studies started to come up with positive thoughts about translating other languages than English. For instance, the Ukrainian language was used in Karaban and Karaban (2024) to provide a detailed comparative analysis of translations of twelve poems by the great Ukrainian poet Ivan Franko. The translations were done by both a human translator, Percival Cundy, and the GPT-3.5 AI language model. Using various manual and automatic analytical methods, the study examines the merits, demerits, and essential linguistic and poetic characteristics of both sets of translations. The results suggest that human and AI translations can be quite comparable in quality and poetic features, highlighting the potential of AI in poetry translation and its ability to make poetic heritage more accessible to a wider audience.

Expanding the discussion beyond poetry translation, some studies revealed shortcomings of AI in writing academically. For instance, Hadan et al. (2024) investigated how peer reviewers perceive and potentially misjudge AI-augmented manuscripts. Surveying with 17 reviewers from top-tier HCI conferences, the findings revealed that while AI-augmented writing improves readability, language diversity, and informativeness, it often lacks detailed research insights and a human touch. Reviewers in the study perceived AI-assisted papers as more honest but often could not distinguish them from human-written ones. Their assessment of research quality remained unchanged, and those familiar with AI rated the clarity of AI-assisted papers higher. The reviewers rated AI-generated and human-written papers equally. Importantly, reviewers valued the "human touch" the most, which includes unique perspectives, personal insights, critical analysis, deep expertise, and logical flow. The study advocates for impartial evaluation guidelines and emphasizes the importance of maintaining research quality and authorship integrity when using AI tools.

Unlike academic writing, poetry often depends on subtle nuances, emotions, and imagery that are difficult to capture in another language. AI may struggle to convey the same feelings or artistic intent. Many poems rely on specific rhythmic and rhyming schemes that are crucial to their structure. While AI can attempt to maintain these elements, achieving the same effect in the target language is complex. Poetic language often references cultural, historical, or personal contexts without direct equivalents in another language, meaning AI might miss these layers of meaning. Metaphors, similes, and puns, which are common in poetry, add another layer of difficulty as AI might not always find suitable equivalents. Despite these challenges, AI can still be useful for generating simple poems or offering comments on existing ones.

Method

The study used a comparative approach to analyze the translations of three of the author's self-composed poems, highlighting AI's specific limitations in (a) preserving poetic devices, (b) conveying emotional connotations, and (c) capturing cultural context. Translations in Arabic, English, and French were produced using ChatGPT4 and compared to human translations made by the author whose translations serve as a benchmark, preserving the original intent, emotion, and cultural nuances. This approach sets a robust standard against which AI translations are measured. The source material remains consistent across all translations, reducing variability and allowing for the isolation of performance differences between AI and human translators. This tri-lingual analysis provides a broad perspective on AI translation capabilities. It offers a comprehensive view of AI's performance across three languages to ascertain if AI struggles more with certain languages or linguistic features.

Data Collection and Analysis

The study relied on three self-selected poems composed by the author himself being a poet in three languages: Arabic, English, and French. The poems represented a diverse range of poetic styles, themes, and cultural references. They were selected to examine the cultural nuances and context, emotional depth and tone, metaphorical language, rhyme and rhythm, poetic devices, and the poet's voice.

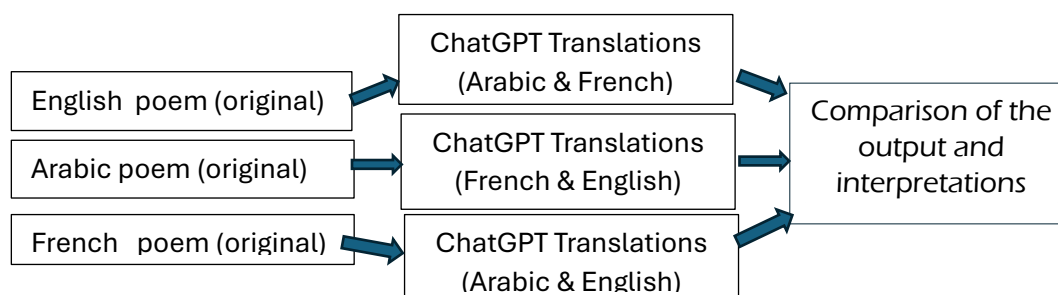


Figure 1. Poem Sampling and Processing

The author, being trilingual in Arabic, English, and French, also served as the human translator for the poems used in this study. AI-based translation tools, viz ChatGPT, were used to translate poems, and the resulting translations were compared to human-generated versions. The analysis focused on evaluating the accuracy, fluency, preservation of poetic devices, emotional connotations, and cultural context of the translations. By identifying specific deviations between AI-generated and human translations, the study aimed to uncover the underlying restrictions of AI-based translation tools in handling the complexities of poetic language. The analysis identified specific instances where the AI-generated translations deviated from the human translations in terms of accuracy, fluency, and the preservation of poetic elements. These deviations were then analyzed to identify the underlying limitations of the AI-based translation tools. Due to the dual role as both poet and translator, the analysis was interpreted with greater caution, recognizing the significant potential for authorial and translational bias.

Results and Discussion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by AI in translating poetry from Arabic to English by analyzing the translations of three self-composed poems. To begin with, Poem 1 in Table 1 illustrates AI's performance in translating a short poem from English into Arabic. ChatGPT's attempt to translate the original poem "Angel" into Arabic, adds words of its own that have no equivalences in the original text (لا يجروء، الضرر، ود معتبر، في كل نظر) (لا يندثر، بلا عثر، في السهر). The purpose behind this translation technique adopted by ChatGPT is to create a rhyme scheme. However, the outcome sounds clumsy in so far as a typical Arab reader of poetry is concerned. The extremely short lines create a choppy, disconnected feel. Arabic poetry, even in modern forms, rarely uses such short, fragmented lines. This is the primary reason it sounds clumsy to an Arabic reader. For instance, ملاك محبوب، بين البشر، يخشاه، (Malak mahbub ، bayna al-bashar ، yakhshah، al-shaytan) - A beloved angel ،among humans ،he fears him ،the devil. This is not how a poetic thought would be expressed in Arabic. Moreover, an instance of inaccurate word choice and misinterpretations can be illustrated by لا يجروء على الأثر (wa la yajru' ala al-'athar). While meaning 'and he does not dare on the trace,' this is a very literal and unnatural rendering of 'Whom the devil is very afraid to trace.' 'Trace' here implies following or pursuing, not just finding a physical trace.

As for loss of poetic devices and tone, let's take the first two lines (in English):
 A beloved angel among the human race ،Whom the devil is very afraid to trace
 And the AI Translation: ملاك محبوب، بين البشر، يخشاه، الشيطان ولا يجروء على الأثر

The improved translation could be ملاكٌ حبيبٌ بينَ الأنامِ ، يَخشى إبليسُ أن يفتني خُطاهُ (Malakun ḥabībun bayna al-'anām ، Yakhsha 'Iblīsu 'an yaqtafiya khuṭāh) - "A beloved angel among mankind ، Iblis fears to follow his footsteps. This improved version has more poetic vocabulary ("الأنام" - al-'anām - mankind, "خُطاهُ" - khuṭāh - his footsteps). It creates a smoother flow by combining the thoughts into two more complete verses and more accurately conveys the meaning of "trace" as following or pursuing.

Table 1. Translation from English into Arabic

Original text	AI version
A beloved angel among the human race	ملاك محبوب بين البشر
Whom the devil is very afraid to trace	يخشاه الشيطان ولا يجرؤ على الأثر
His enemy is now a hopeless case	عدوه الآن في حالٍ من اليأس والضرر
He likes to help me with good grace	يحب أن يساعدني بلطف وودٍ معتبر
And enjoys to bring the smile on my face	ويستمتع بجلب البسمة إلى وجهي في كل نظر
In my heart, he has a special place	في قلبي له مكان خاص لا يندثر
Now I can move at a steady pace	والآن أتحرك بخطى ثابتة بلا عثر
With his light as a star in my space.	بنوره كنجمة تضيء فضائي في السهر

When the same poem was translated by ChatGPT into French, the outcome is herewith:

Un ange bien-aimé parmi la race humaine,
Que le diable a très peur de suivre la trace.
Son ennemi est maintenant un cas désespéré,
Il aime m'aider avec une bonne grâce,
Et il aime apporter le sourire sur mon visage.
Dans mon cœur, il occupe une place spéciale,
Maintenant, je peux avancer à un rythme régulier,
Avec sa lumière comme une étoile dans mon espace.

Having in mind the original poem, the French interpretation by ChatGPT seems more appealing than the Arabic one. This might be because English and French have many things in common, notably on the lexical level. However, apart from the exactitude of the above-translated version, structurally and semantically, the translated text seems unrelated to poetry. It looks like a vivid description of a wonderful friend.

Regarding English-French translation, Poem 2 in Table 2 was translated from French into English. At first sight, we cannot help admiring the above poetic-like translation from French into English. Seemingly, ChatGPT is doing its best not to translate literally for three reasons: to add a poetic feature to the translated text, to keep up with human translation and to have the freedom to twist some words of the original poem in order to create rhymes, e.g. verse no. 4 (À mes yeux, elle est une vedette) could have been translated simply as (In my eyes, she is a star) whereas, ChatGPT translated it as (To me, her star-like glow is profound)! As the poet of this poem, it is not what I intended to say. The nuances in this line are the deviation from the intended meaning of "In my eyes, she is a star", altering the nuances and adding new connotations. In the original version, it is a straightforward metaphor expressing admiration. It's easily understood and conveys a sense of the person being exceptional or admirable. While figurative, the image of a star is a common and relatable one, grounded in everyday experience. The emphasis is on the *person* being the star. The metaphor directly equates her with a celestial object known for its brilliance and prominence. The admiration is implied through the use of the well-established "star" metaphor.

In comparison, the ChatGPT translation, 'her star-like glow is profound', is more abstract and less direct. It focuses on a "glow" rather than the person themselves. This "glow" is a more diffuse and less concrete image than a star. The phrase "To me" shifts the focus to the *observer's perception* of the person. It emphasizes the subjective experience of the observer rather than the inherent qualities of the person being described. The word "profound" adds a connotation of depth, mystery, and perhaps even awe. This wasn't present in the original, simpler

metaphor. The person is no longer just a star; their "glow" has a deep, almost mystical quality. The direct equation of the person with a star is lost. The person now *has* a "star-like glow," making the metaphor less immediate and more descriptive. It's a quality *of* them, not a direct identification *as* something. The AI's version is arguably more "poetic" in its language, using more evocative words like "glow" and "profound." However, this comes at the cost of accuracy and faithfulness to the original meaning. It's trying too hard to be poetic, introducing a level of complexity and abstraction that wasn't present in the original.

Table 2. Translation from French into English

Original text	AI version
Ma chère amie Ma chère amie a la tête bien faite Pour faire le bien, elle est prête J'ai trouvé un ange sur cette planète À mes yeux, elle est une vedette Le jour où je la vois devient ma fête Quiconque la déteste est une bête Grâce à elle, je suis devenu un poète Ravi, content et dans mon assiette Envers elle, je serai toujours en dette.	My Dear Friend My dear friend has a brilliant mind, Always ready to be kind. An angel on this earth I've found, To me, her star-like glow is profound. The day I see her feels like a feast, Whoever dislikes her is a beast. Thanks to her, I've become a poet, Joyful, content, and completely at rest. To her, I'll forever be indebted.

In short, the AI's translation of the original poem shifts the emphasis from the *person* to the *observer's perception of a quality of that person*. It adds connotations of depth and mystery while losing the directness and simplicity of the original metaphor. While the AI's version might be considered more "poetic" in some ways, it deviates significantly from the intended meaning and introduces nuances that weren't present in the original phrase. This is a clear example of the AI prioritizing poetic-sounding language over an accurate representation of the original meaning.

Likewise, the original French poem was translated into Arabic by ChatGPT, and the outcome version is herewith:

صديقتي العزيزة ذات العقل السليم
لعمل الخير، هي مستعدة
وجدت ملائكا على هذه الأرض،
في نظري، هي نجمة
اليوم الذي أراها فيه يصبح عيداً
وأي شخص يكرهها فهو غبي
بفضلها، أصبحت شاعراً
وراضياً بكل ما يوضع في طريقي
وأمامها سأظل مديوناً

The translation of the French poem "Ma chère amie" into Arabic is as seen above, void of the romantic touch of the original poem. It is not only a literal translation, but it also contains a mistake. The French phrase "dans mon assiette" means "Content with myself" rather than (ما يوضع في طريقي) as ChatGPT wrongly translated it. In the original Arabic poem in Table 3, the word 'حديثي' was translated as 'my story' while I would translate it as 'my talk', for a poet talks rather than tells a story. Besides, the alliteration is lost (من معجب بشعري ومن مفترني) in the translated version. The last item is the poem reflects a pride mixed with a sarcastic tone towards the poet's rivals. Besides, this poem seems interesting and readable in terms of structure and musicality. Now the question is: has ChatGPT successfully carried the same effect to the ears of the reader? The answer is Yes and no. The translated version is successful, semantically and syntactically, but when it comes to music (rhyme and rhythm), the effect is lost. On the other hand, we are all aware that what is funny or sarcastic in a certain culture might not be the same in a different one. So, as seen in the translated version, the text looks plain and void of poetic nuances.

Table 3. Translation from Arabic into English

Original text	AI version
<p>هل أتاك حديثي أنا المقطري ؟ لا أملك إلا ديوان شعري وجواز سفري قد رأيت الذين يفتنون أثري من معجب بشعري ومن مفتري يرتاح قلبي لأحبابي ويسعد بهم نظري ادعو لهم ربي في صحوي وفي سهرتي</p>	<p>Have you heard my story? I am Almaktary I own nothing but my poetry collection and my passport. I have seen those who trace my footsteps: Some admire my poetry, while others slander me. My heart finds comfort with my loved ones, and my eyes delight in them. I pray for them to my Lord, both in my wakefulness and my sleeplessness.</p>

This Arabic short poem was translated into French by ChatGPT as follows:

Avez-vous entendu parler de moi, je suis Almaktary?
Je ne possède qu'un recueil de poésie et mon passeport.
J'ai vu ceux qui suivent mes traces,
Entre admirateurs de ma poésie et calomniateurs.
Mon cœur se réjouit auprès de mes bien-aimés, et mes yeux s'illuminent à leur vue.
Je prie pour eux, mon Seigneur, dans mon éveil et dans mes nuits.

As seen in the Arabic poem, music and readability are salient. Such merits have disappeared in the French translated version which has nothing to do with poetry. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that machine translation is less reliable in dealings with poetry, and so, the only ideal poem translators must be poets.

My point of view, as the composer of the three original poems above, is that the produced versions of ChatGPT are, to some extent, acceptable in terms of semantics and syntax. However, it is unrewarding for any poet to see their poems void of rhymes and rhythms. The hidden feelings of poets in their poems are impossible to translate by machines. I believe that once a poem gets translated into a different language, it is no longer a poem. It may be called a hazy shadow of the poem. Taking the variance of ChatGPT translations altogether shows ChatGPT's pitfalls in handling translations in three languages: Arabic, English and French. The pitfalls mainly relate to loss of rhyme and rhythm and loss of emotional and aesthetic impact. In this respect, Tahseen and Hussein (2024) noted that the rhythmic qualities of poetry, like alliteration, can be disrupted.

In the given poems, AI failed to preserve poetic devices such as metaphors, similes, and alliteration. Metaphors and similes lose their intended impact, resulting in the lack of the original text's poetic qualities. For misinterpretation of emotional connotations, AI may struggle to accurately convey the emotional connotations of poetry, leading to translations that are emotionally flat or inaccurate, for loss of cultural context, cultural references and allusions in poetry can be difficult for AI to understand and translate accurately, resulting in translations that are culturally insensitive or inaccurate. Sukmaningrum et al. (2023) asserted that the emotional depth and cultural significance inherent in the original poems are frequently diminished or misrepresented. Poetry is a highly nuanced form of language that relies on a variety of literary devices and emotional connotations to convey meaning. These elements can be difficult for AI to capture accurately, as they often involve subtle linguistic and cultural nuances.

Like Alowedi and Al-Ahdal (2023), this study confirms that AI fails to accurately convey the emotional connotations of poetry, leading to translations that lack depth and authenticity. The study identifies key challenges such as the preservation of poetic devices, which also resonates with Smith's (2019) findings on the conveyance of emotional connotations and the accurate representation of cultural contexts. Also, Obeidat and Jaradat (2024) highlighted that AI tools including Google Translate and ChatGPT distort the original text due to their lack of nuanced understanding and context. The shortcomings of AI were also explored by Walsh et al. (2024) who used ChatGPTs to generate English-language poems in various forms and

styles. The findings showed that 5,700 GPT-generated poems compared to 3,700 human-authored poems reveal that while GPT can produce poems in different forms, its output tends to be more formulaic and constrained. Likewise, Doudou and Faizi (2024), using two poems by Nizar Qabbani, comparing human translations with AI-enhanced versions, examined whether AI can match human translators in preserving the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities of poetry, and it investigated the role of human intervention in this process. The findings suggest that while ChatGPT excels in maintaining formal aspects of translation, it struggles with capturing semantic nuances, particularly from Arabic to English.

The current study, though of a small scale and a reflection of the poet himself, contributes to the ongoing debate about the complexities of translating poetry into Arabic, English, and French through ChatGPT which echoes Karaban and Karaban's (2023) findings in the Ukrainian context. This study and Karaban and Karaban (2024) both explore AI's role in poetry translation but differ in key ways. This study focuses on Arabic, English, and French using the author's poems and a qualitative, subjective analysis of lost poetic nuances. Karaban and Karaban (2024) examined the Ukrainian-to-English translation of established poetry with a more quantitative approach, comparing AI output to existing human translations. Thus, this study offers a personal, cross-linguistic perspective on AI's limitations, while the other provides a more objective comparison of translation quality.

While AI has the potential to revolutionize machine translation, translating poetry remains a formidable task. Developing AI systems may produce more accurate poetry translations, which will ultimately bridge the gap between machine efficiency and human artistry, the gap between the literal and the figurative, and the technical and the emotional (Tahseen & Hussein, 2024). The current study strengthens Doudou and Faizi's (2024) findings that highlighted the importance of precise prompts and a balanced approach combining AI and human expertise that can best convey the essence of poetry. This study is useful for consolidating our "knowledge and practice of translation quality assessment in increasingly technological environments across research, teaching, and professional practice" (Castilho et al., 2018, p. 9). It underscores the importance of creating more sophisticated AI translation systems that work from a holistic approach to translating poetry, preserving the essence of the original texts (Amini et al. 2024).

Conclusion

This study highlights the significant challenges AI faces in translating poetry from Arabic, English, and French, focusing on its difficulty in capturing poetic devices, emotional connotations, and cultural contexts. The analysis showed how ChatGPT struggles with elements like metaphors, similes, and alliteration, resulting in translations that lack the artistic qualities of the original texts. AI's misinterpretation of emotional nuances leads to translations that are emotionally flat or inaccurate. Cultural references and allusions within poetry also pose a significant challenge, resulting in translations that are culturally insensitive or incorrect. By identifying areas of weakness where AI translations fall short, the study provides insights into potential improvements for AI translation models. Perhaps future versions of ChatGPT and similar apps may enhance AI to interpret poetic language more than its existing attempts. Using self-composed poems in this study presents an advantage and some limitations. While it allowed for precise control over the source material and facilitated a detailed analysis of the translation's impact on specific stylistic devices, it also introduced a substantial risk of authorial bias. Because the author is intimately connected to the original intent, the findings may reflect personal sensibilities and translation choices rather than a universally applicable assessment of AI's performance. The analysis included only three short poems in three languages which restricted the variety of poetic devices: metaphor, simile, alliteration, and rhyme in each of the three languages. Future research could employ a larger and more diverse corpus of poems from multiple authors, utilizing objective evaluation metrics, and incorporating external validation from literary experts.

Disclosure Statement:

I (the author of this paper) hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of this paper. I take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.

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